

Message Text

SECRET

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12-S
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-07 MC-02 L-02 AID-05 COME-00

TRSE-00 OMB-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SNM-02 DEAE-00

JUSE-00 /062 W
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O 011000Z APR 75
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9369

S E C R E T RANGOON 0832

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI MASS BM
SUBJ: PROPOSED BURMESE PURCHASE OF ARMORED CARS

REF: A. STATE 071923
B. RANGOON 0800

1. SUMMARY: I STRONGLY RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT RECONSIDER DECISION
REF A. AS REFLECTED REF B, OUTLOOK FOR US-GUB COOPERATION IN NAR-
COTICS FIELD IS IMPROVING SIGNIFICANTLY, AND THIS PROGRESS WOULD
DEFINITELY BE JEOPARDIZED BY IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION. THE
CONSIDERATIONS LISTED IN PARA 4 REF A DO NOT RPT NOT OFFSET THIS
CLEAR RISK. END SUMMARY.

2. IF THE DEPARTMENT'S DECISION TO DENY CADILLAC GAGE AN EXPORT
LICENSE FOR THE SALE OF ARMORED CARS TO BURMA WAS INDEED, AS
STATED, FAIRLY CLOSELY BALANCED, THEN THE BALANCE SHOULD BE TIPPED
THE OTHER WAY BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF US-GUB
NARCOTICS CONTROL COOPERATION (REF B). IN DISCUSSING WITH AMB-
ASSADOR VANCE THE BACKGROUND OF AND PROSPECTS FOR US-GUB COOPERA-
TION IN THIS FIELD, COLONEL TIN OO, THE SENIOR RESPONSIBLE BURMESE
OFFICIAL, STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE AND RAPPORT
AS A BASIS FOR EXPANDING SUCH COOPERATION (E.G., THE ASSIGNMENT OF
A DEA AGENT TO RANGOON). THIS IS A HIGHLY PERSONALIZED REGIME,

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AND FOR US TO TELL ITS LEADERS IN THIS TANGIBLE WAY THAT WE

DISAPPROVE OF THEM WOULD PROBABLY IMPAIR COOPERATION IN THE NARCOTICS CONTROL AREA, AND PERHAPS PERMANENTLY.

3. AT ALL EVENTS, THE MESSAGE CONVEYED BY IMPLEMENTING THE DECISION IN ACCORDANCE WITH REF A WOULD LOSE MOST OF THE NUANCES INTENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT. FOR THE GUB STANDPOINT, WHAT THE EVENTS OF LAST DECEMBER DEMONSTRATED WAS: A) A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO CONTAIN THE PRIMARILY VERBAL AND NON-VIOLENT DISSENT AT THE UNIVERSITY WITHOUT RESORT TO LETHAL FORCE; AND B) A NECESSARY RESORT TO FORCE TO COPE WITH THE MOB VIOLENCE WHICH FOLLOWED EVENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY. IF WE WANT THE GUB TO KNOW THAT WE ARE EXPRESSING DISTASTE FOR ITS "GROWING PRIMARY RELIANCE ON REPRESSIVE SECURITY MEASURES TO COPE WITH INTENSIFYING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PRESSURES," WE WILL HAVE TO TELL THEM SO MUCH MORE EXPLICITLY. OTHERWISE THEY ARE QUITE LIKELY TO INTERPRET THE DENIAL AS AN EXPRESSION OF LINGERING PARTISANSHIP FOR U NU, OR DRAW SOME OTHER ERRONEOUS CONCLUSION.

4. THE GUB IS PARTICULARLY UNLIKELY TO INFER FROM OUR DENIAL OF THE GAGE CADILLAC LICENSE THAT WE WISH THEM TO EMPHASIZE ECONOMIC REFORMS. IN ANY CASE, THE BURMESE WOULD PROBABLY NOT PERCEIVE THE SAME LINKAGE BETWEEN THE LICENSE DENIAL AND THE CONSORTIUM AS THE DEPARTMENT APPARENTLY DOES, SO THAT THE IMPACT ON OUR "CREDIBILITY" OF A REFUSAL TO TAKE PART IN THE CONSORTIUM WOULD NOT BE MADE ANY THE WORSE BY THE LICENSE DENIAL. IF

"CREDIBILITY" IS INVOLVED, IT IS BY VIRTUE OF THE RATHER POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CONSORTIUM IDEA WHICH SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED TO GUB REPRESENTATIVES IN THE PAST. AS A MATTER OF POLICY, I WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT THE ISSUE OF PARTICIPATION IN A CONSORTIUM BE DECIDED ON PRIMARILY ECONOMIC GROUNDS.

5. THE AVAILABILITY TO THE BURMESE OF EXCESS T-33'S IS NO LONGER NEWS TO THEM. ACCORDINGLY, DESPITE SIGNS OF RENEWED BURMESE INTEREST, REAFFIRMING CONTINUED AVAILABILITY OF THESE PLANES WOULD NOT DO MUCH TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF THE CADILLAC GAGE LICENSE DENIAL.

6. I REALIZE THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS LITTLE TIME IN WHICH TO REVERSE ITS DECISION, BUT I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DID NOT CALL TO
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THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION THE NEW NATIONAL-INTEREST CONSIDERATION THAT HAS ARISEN SINCE THE LICENSING DECISION WAS ORIGINALLY BROACHED: -- NAMELY, THE VERY DELICATE STATE OF PLAY IN THE FIELD OF NARCOTICS CMTROL, AN AREA OF VITAL CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES.
OSBORN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, SALES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, AUTOMOBILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975RANGOO00832
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750112-0216
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750493/aaaadgzj.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 071923
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED BURMESE PURCHASE OF ARMORED CARS
TAGS: MILI, MASS, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006